563 621 593 562 /Oirats/

return to her father's family, in which case she forfeits all rights which were hers as a member of her husband's family.

The oldest male of the oldest family holds the position of 563 622 "axalaci" which carries with it the right of final authority in the group. Upon the death of the "axalaci" authority over the "xotn" is invested in his wife who in turn passes the care of the herds on to her oldest son or a younger brother of her husband.

[422] [233] Herds are the common property of the "xotn" but are managed by the "axalaci." However, the cattle belonging to dependent related or non-related families are managed by the owners and is not the common property of the "xotn."

563 622 591 233 If any of the sons of the "axalaci" desires to move away from the family and establish himself independently, he can rightfully claim a percentage of the common herd. If the particular times happen to be especially prosperous so that cattle are in such abundance that pasturage in one area is lacking to supply them all, the son might be encouraged to leave, the pressure for his departure increasing if there were ample manpower to get along without him.

563 622 233 428 When the "axalaci" dies the herds are distributed evenly among his children, with the exception of the eldest son, who receives a larger percentage than his younger brothers. A certain percentage also passes into the ownership of the clergy.

563 621 The "xotn" or encampment is a political as well as an economic unit. It is termed a "fifteen" (does this mean that each "xotn" was broken into units of fifteen yurts, or is it simply a convenient term synonomous with "xotn"? The reference is vague on this point.)

563 628 [626] If a crime is committed by a member of a particular "fifteen" against an individual or group outside of his own "fifteen" the entire unit will be penalized for this infraction of the law. Thus, a strong element of social control was made operative.

563 62[1] [651] [582] The "xotn" is also a very convenient unit for purposes of taxation, and as a resource of cattle and other animals it was the income for the nobility and the lamaseries. In addition the encampment is an exogamic unit.

563 628 233 423 The use of pasturage among the various "xotan" is based primarily on tradition. Each has several hundred acres of land from which they choose a part each summer and each winter. If by chance one group needs the pasturage of another, the former will ask permission, and this will normally be granted. Special arrangements have always to be made, however; no group can simply move in on another's pasturage.

563 622 628 The axalaci of several "fifteens" in addition to chosen

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563 leaders from every five-tent group meet on problems of
622 importance such as taxes, Oirat-Chinese relations,
628 internal administration, new regulations and laws, etc.
This assembly of a tribe is called in Oirat: xurug.

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992 Lamaseries function as marketing centers and these are
443 the only places where non-patrilineally-related people meet each other in order to trade their products and where they go for religious festivals.

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563 There are slight differences in herd ownership and
619 management between the various tribes of the Western
233 Mongols. (They call themselves the "Dörwön Oirat" (or
422 "four Oirat") or Ulan-Zalatan ("those who wear red tassels on their hats).) The main tribes of Western Mongols are the Torguts, the Dörböts and the Ölöts plus the Oirat proper.

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[602] Some tribes merge the herds of related and non-related
[609] individuals while others do not. The basis for different types of economic activities is the "non-kinship-relationship."

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563 Some Western Mongolian tribes came in contact with
177 other peoples more than other tribes did, in the course of history, with the result that customs, usage, and tradition
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[184] underwent slight changes. Nevertheless, the pattern of authority, of inheritance, and the fact that the extended family represents a basic functional unit for purposes of taxation, exogamy, election, etc., are by and large the same in all tribes.

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563 The Salars:
794 *In the Chinese province of* Kansu are found three classes of Moslems. There are those who have descended from the merchants on the old trade route from China through Persia to Arabia; another group has evolved from the Uighur branch of the Hun family; and finally there are the Salars. The Salars are of pure Turkish origin and are among the latest arrivals in China.

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[197] To their new home the Salars brought with them the
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[191] original Turkish language and to this day that is their spoken language. The men have learned just a few words of Chinese and the women hardly any. This is one of the indications of a
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563 lack of assimilation which is characteristic of the Moslems
794 in the west of China. Thus there is a general similarity among
177 the Moslems of Kansu and a dissimilarity between them and
184 Moslems further east. With the progression eastward assimilation of Islam to the Chinese way of life increases to the extent that finally the only difference is the abstinence from eating pork.

This difference in the degree of assimilation can be attributed to four factors: the Moslems in the east have been exposed to

preclude their enjoying any great influence.

The Salars' pattern of social life follows the Islamic form. Patriarchy rules the extended family, whose members' main occupation is agricultural work. However, agriculture goes hand in hand with trade, which plays also a noticeable role. As a group, the Salars are economically unimportant since they form only a small Turkic tribe.

The Sarigh Uighurs:

The Sarigh Uighurs, the so-called Yellow Uighurs, are a small tribe of Turkic origin which is becoming extinct. Although immediate neighbors of the Chinese, they never learned agriculture, and remained herdsmen. Nowadays the Sarigh Uighurs are mostly hired shepherds of Chinese cattle owners. Frequently one also finds them as laborers on Chinese farms. An occasional Sarigh Uighur family owns a few cows, sheep, and horses. The smallest and the only social unit, is the patriarchal family.

The Shera Yögur:

The people belonging to this small Mongolian tribe, rapidly becoming extinct, are semi-nomadic herdsmen. The old Mongolian clan-system is still preserved. Clan exogamy exists and the migrational units are the single clans. The economic centers, however, are their Buddhist monasteries, for it is the monasteries who own the herds and not the individual tribesmen.

The Monguors:

Ethnically consisting of Mongols, Turks, Tibetans, and Chinese, speaking an old Mongolian and Tibetanized dialect, the Monguors are the only Mongolian tribe of the Northwest that shifted successfully from nomadic pastoralism to farming. They learned farming and the use of their agricultural tools for raising barley, wheat, peas, potatoes, etc., from the Chinese. However, livestock still plays an important role as the second inportant economic resource. While sheep, cows, mules, and pigs are economically important, horses are bred only because to own horses is a mark of prestige.

The basic social and economic unit of the Monguors is the extended family which is patrilineally and patrilocally oriented. The grandfather and great-grandfather enjoy authority over all members of the family. Property is collectively owned.

The families belong to a clan which is headed by a chieftain whose Chinese title is T'u-ssu, who is at the same time a Chinese official. Originally the clan chieftain was simply the head of a number of extended families, whose migrations he directed and whose highest duty was the military protection of the clan through organization and training of the men. Later

depends on his herds: they are his only resource, his only wealth, and his only pride. When two nomads meet, whether they are Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Mongols, or Tibetans, the first subject that comes up is their cattle. Among nomads, social status is established by the possession of horses, camels, and livestock in general, and only secondarily determined by titles or descent. This is especially true for the Kirghiz, Kazakhs and Tibetans, and to a lesser degree for the Mongols, among whom aristocratic birth (real or imagined) plays an important role.

The average nomad's life can be described as follows: he lives in a roomy felt tent, furnished with house altar, in the case of Buddhists, or with an artistically made book-stand for the Quran in the case of Muslims, and some chests and carpets. The whole family takes care of the livestock, and periodically the migration unit moves during the summer time from pasture to pasture, preserving the richest and most protected grazing land for the winter time. The weather plays a fatal role in the welfare of the nomad's livestock, and every so often a migration unit (the ail, the aul, the ayir, the omoq, otoq, xotn, or uruq, the ulus or even the aimaq) loses its livestock. In this case, those clans which still own enough livestock divide their herds and lend part of them to those who suffered the loss. Collective cooperation is exercised in this respect by Kazakhs, Kirghiz and Mongols, while the nomadic Tibetans, in a similar situation, have quite a reputation for robbing neighboring tribes of their livestock.

The nomadic way of life, the close contact with nature and dependence on nature promotes animism, shamanism, and spiritualism, which goes hand in hand with the prevailing religions of Islam (in the case of the Kirghiz, Kazakhs, Salars, and some Tibetan clans) and Buddhism (in the case of the Mongols, Tibetans, and Sarigh-Uighurs). As a general rule, the nomadic Kirghiz and Kazakh are not very fanatic or ardent Muslims, and neither are the Mongols very pious Buddhists, but still, both feel strongly about their religious although they are rather lax in their observance. No matter how poor a Buddhistic nomad is, he voluntarily supports and feeds wandering lamas, invites several on major occasions (birth, death, and marriage if the bride's father can afford it), pays them, and finally is accustomed to the old tradition ot giving a small percentage of his livestock every year to Buddhistic monasteries. All nomads are very superstitious, and the relationship between cause and effect is often misinterpreted, e.g., in the case of disease or weather. It is safe to say that the dominant motives of the nomads are economic in the first place and religious in the second place.

1: Washington S-4 (no date) 1956 AF13 Northwest China
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SOCIAL STRUCTURE

I. The Nomads

A. The Nomadic Turks (Kazakh, Kirghiz and Uzbek)

563 556 611 428 The distinguishing feature of the social structure of the nomadic Turks of the Northwest is that social status is acquired by wealth (sheep, cows, camels and horses) or by descent. Descent among the nomadic Turks is always patrilineal, and a modified form of [425] ultimogeniture is found. As the sons of each family marry, each one receives an equal share of the family's wealth. This includes a winter pasture. Only the youngest son inherits the father's property (tents, precious furniture, etc.).

621 563 [592] The smallest social unit is the family; a number of related families constitute an aul which is at the same time the migration unit in regard to pastoral nomadism.

[233] [622] Unrestricted authority is held by the patriarch of the family. The patriarch of the most influential family (measured in terms of wealth and family connections) becomes the chieftain of an aul.

621 563 614 422 A certain number of auls constitute the great aul. The latter possesses a common property brand which is called tamga (the tamga marks are to be found mostly on the left side of animals, on tents and on gravestones. The tamgas are believed to be of totemistic origin and therefore thought to be a very old institution. Their purpose, obviously, is to distinguish and identify herds and other property.

614 563 The great aul (which might also be called a sub-clan) is led by a chieftain whose title is bäk, beg, biy, bey, or pex, depending upon the Turkic dialect concerned. The chieftain of such a great aul functions as a leader and as a judge whose duty it is to mediate and to appease in disputes between single persons, families and auls. Several great auls constitute a clan, which is also led by one of the bäks of the great auls. Several clans together form 614 619 563 a tribe which is led by a khan or sultan and finally two or three tribes constitute a horde which in turn form the nation; e.g., the Kazakh have four hordes, the Kirghiz two, etc. Sometimes it is 621 614 596 563 difficult to decide what constitutes a great aul or sub-clan and what is actually a clan. An extended family may have the function of an aul; a great clan may have the function of a clan; while a declined clan only has the function of an aul.

[829] A Kazakh Turk could define his position within his own people by stating that he belongs a)to the Turkic race b) to the Kazakh nation c) to the Middle horde d) to the Kipchak tribe e) to the Toru Aibgyr clan f) to the Shashli sub-clan (great aul) g) to the Boshai branch (aul) and h) to the Janay sub-branch (extended family). 614 563 For the Kirghiz and Kazakhs, a clan can be defined as a social group which, by force of either real or putative consanguinity,